ABSTRACT

A method and apparatus for two-stage packet classification. In the first stage, which may be implemented in software, a packet is classified on the basis of the packet's network path and, perhaps, its protocol. In the second stage, which may be implemented in hardware, the packet is classified on the basis of one or more transport level fields of the packet. An apparatus of two-stage packet classification may include a processing system for first stage code execution, a classification circuit for performing the second stage of classification, and a memory to store a number of bins, each bin including one or more rules.